

LACDMH Coordinates First Korean Speaking Clergy Roundtable

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On Monday, October 17, 2016, more than nine faith-based leaders and five LACDMH clinicians attended the first Korean speaking Clergy Roundtable at LACDMH headquarters. This was the first Clergy Roundtable meeting held entirely in another language. The group was spearheaded and facilitated by Jung Ahn, LCSW, and co-facilitated by Joo Lee, LMFT of SA 4.

The purpose of all Clergy Roundtables is to foster relationships, enhance skills, and build a foundation for networking between LACDMH and the faith-based community.

The Roundtable approach uses the strategy of bringing small gatherings of diverse local clergy and mental health staff together once a month to build trust and to exchange information. It allows neighborhood clergy to demonstrate collaboration with the mental health system and to become ambassadors within their faith communities. At the same time, participating mental health staff members develop an awareness of considering the spiritual interests of those seeking services.

It also contributes to creating collaborative models between LACDMH, contract providers and local faith-based institutions which can expand the knowledge of mental health services within the community while promoting the importance of spirituality and faith-based resources for individuals in mental health recovery.

Goals of Faith-Based Advocacy Roundtables:

- Creating working relationships between clergy, LACDMH staff and contracted providers.
- Expanding the knowledge of community/LACDMH resources and how to access those resources among clergy.
- Expanding mental health staff understanding of the role of the faith-based community in the recovery process.
- Assisting LACDMH staff and contract providers in understanding how to access partners in the faith-based community.
- Creating relationships that lay the foundation for more expansive collaboration between mental health and faith based community practitioners.

General Guidelines for Roundtable participation include: the commitment to attend at least the first six monthly meetings, understanding that everyone can be learners and teachers, information discussed is confidential, no texting or cell phone conversations allowed, willingness to challenge language—for Clergy to clarify psychological terms and acronyms; for mental health staff to explore meaning of rituals and/or traditions unknown to them, and a willingness to participate in discussion.

